These will bring over 909 acres under irrigation, and are likely to be highly profitable. Several have already been sanctioned for execution in 1084. Six more are under investigation.

"Investigation of the Erattakarakal extension was in hand during the year and the results so far are favourable.

"The water distribution has been in the hands of the department, and notwithstanding great shortage of local rain and partial failure of the south-west monsoon, all the land under the Kodayar Project, for which channels are finished, was supplied with Kodayar water and the crops were brought to maturity.

"The Dam and the Head Works and the Left Bank Channel are in good order. The brick-lining has stood well.

"The irrigation channels have been generally well maintained.

"A small scouring sluice was built into the Puthen dam and has proved very useful in scouring out sand from the river bed."

36. The Kodayar Irrigation Cess.—Speaking in regard to the irrigation cess proposed to be charged on lands benefited by the Kodayar Project, I said to the Assembly last year that a special officer was then investigating the question, that after his report was received, I would visit the area concerned and hear what the ryots had to say before final orders were passed by Government. Agreeably to that promise, I visited the southern taluks and inspected large areas commanded by the Kodayar Project. I also held conferences with the ryots at Padmanabhapuram and Nagercoil. After a very careful consideration of the whole question, His Highness' Government resolved to impose a uniform irrigation cess of one rupee per acre on all registered *wet* lands commanded by the Kodayar system in the four taluks of Tovala, Agastisvaram, Eraniel and Kalkulam, irrespective of the tenures of the lands and their settlement land assessments, with effect from 1085. It was also resolved that inam lands and lands free from the payment of land tax shall pay the cess as much as other lands.

The rates of irrigation cess, to be imposed on the registered *dry (and garden)* lands, already converted into wet or likely to be so converted on account of the water supply now afforded, were also fixed.

The disposal of the waste lands on either side of the L. B. Channel and of the tank-beds was considered and instructions were laid down in regard to them. A forecast of the probable revenue which would accrue from the Kodayar Project when the above orders come into full operation, was made. A return of over 3 per cent on the capital outlay is expected.

37. Communications in North Travancore.—I mentioned to the Assembly last session that His Highness' Government were aware that the state of communications in North Travancore compared unfavourably with that in the South, but I added that, in the then state of the public finances and with the Kodayar works on hand, it was not possible to spend much on new works anywhere. We are however now making such rapid progress with the several channels connected with the Kodayar scheme that we are sanguine that the capital expenditure on the works would

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be over practically by the end of 1085. The time has, in the opinion of Government, arrived when active steps should be taken to redress the balance in favour of North Travancore. So far as the Quilon division is concerned, it benefits most by the line of Railway and it is better provided with roads than Kottayam. Further, a scheme for improving the irrigation tanks of the Shencottah taluk (in the Quilon division) is under preparation, which, when carried out, would probably cost three or four lacs of rupees. The wants of the Kottayam division therefore deserve most consideration at our hands and His Highness' Government would now take up and pursue steadily the policy of opening up new communications, or bringing under efficient maintenance such of the existing communications as are not being regularly maintained, in the Kottayam division. We are anxious, in framing a programme of action, to associate with ourselves the people who are to be benefited and I would, therefore, suggest that the members from the Kottayam division should meet under the presidency of the Chief Engineer and select the works which they consider most necessary and to which they wish that preferential consideration should be given. A special allotment of a lac of rupees will be made for this purpose in the budget of 1085. The remaining portion of the current year—1084—will be required by the Public Works department for preparing the necessary plans and estimates.

38. Railway.—The amount paid by His Highness' Government during the year, for making good the guaranteed interest of the railway from Shencottah to Quilon, was Rs. 1,81,302. This railway has been open for through traffic from 1080. The following figures, in regard to the deficit interest made good out of the Sirkar revenues since then, will be interesting :—

	Rs.
1080	2,83,125.
1081	2,22,694.
1082	2,42,525.
1083	1,81,302.

Signs are not wanting to show that the traffic of the railway is slowly beginning to develop.

Anchal.

39.—There were 175 Anchal Offices, 18 of which were opened during the year. The total number of covers, both private and official, posted during the year, was 68,02,740, against 63,93,853 in 1082, showing an increase of 4,08,887 covers. Of this increase, 3,69,732 were private letters and only 39,155 official. The actual receipts from the Anchal Service amounted to Rs. 80,918, and if official covers had been charged for, the receipts would have been Rs. 3,87,664. The cost of working the department was Rs. 1,12,691. The Railway Mail Service from Quilon to Shencottah was introduced during the year under review. The value payable system continued to work satisfactorily. 15,167 V. P. articles were issued during the year. The number of Anchal Offices which did hundi business was 166, against 97 in the previous year. 1,00,414 hundies for Rs. 12,05,318 were issued in the year. The rates of postage charged on letters and newspapers and the rates of commission charged on hundies were revised and reduced during the year.

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